'It's okay to say I'm not okay' - Helpful Distraction

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by reid_simp

Summary

Will lives in a constant reminder of the good and bad things Hannibal did to him.

He's reminded of Hannibal saving his life and carrying him home as much as he reminded of him trying to kill him and drugging him half to death.

He's reminded of all these things in everything he sees. In the food he eats, or doesn’t eat, to be exact.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Will lives in a constant reminder of the good and bad things Hannibal did to him.

He's reminded of Hannibal saving his life and carrying him home as much as he reminded of him trying to kill him and drugging him half to death.

He's reminded of all these things in everything he sees. In the food he eats, or doesn't eat, to be exact. He doesn't eat in restaurants, doesn't eat with friends unless he's seen them prepare it, trusts them with his life, and if they haven't got an intimate knowledge of his mind and workings of his 'empathy disorder'. He doesn't eat the food of strangers under any circumstances, and shops only from a few selected shops where he's tracked their food sources to the farm, and used his police connections to practically stalk them all for weeks, to make sure they're safe.

He's reminded of sitting with families of victims, telling them how sorry he is, telling them he'll find the perpetrator, and then going to Hannibal's and eating their children and partners and siblings.

Molly is a helpful distraction, and he hopes he loves her. She's certainly good for him, but the hate for Hannibal was – and is – verging so deeply on love that he doesn't trust his own instincts. He told her he loved her the moment after she did. He married her because they'd bought a house together and it was the logical next step, because Wally needed stability and marriage was the obvious solution.

He spent a long time without opening himself up to Molly, because to be open around her was to be vulnerable, and being open and vulnerable landed him in an asylum, landed him a smile on his stomach and a recurringly painful scar along his forehead.

Walter asked about his forehead once. Will was lost for words, slipped into some sort of shutdown or dissociation, though he's not sure because he can't particularly remember much. Molly had come up with some half-truth about his 'important days working with the FBI'.

Will hates that Hannibal still has such a tight hold on him. He hasn't visited him since he met Molly. He hasn't visited him since he landed himself in the hospital with self-harm, and met his future wife. The last day he'd spoken to Hannibal, his last visit when Molly told him it wasn't good for him to see him anymore.

But he's still got that hold. His head throbs with a reminder of that night in Florence, and the hours spent in his office while his brain burned and he lost parts of himself he'll never get back.

He'd researched the long term effects of encephalitis, and learnt that most of his symptoms; the hallucinations, the hearing loss, memory loss, etc., can be explained away by that. But it didn't help with the other stuff, the suciidal thoughts, the depression, the anxiety. Because what on earth could cause that, but the profound impact of Hannibal he's been trying to deny for these years.

Of course, wishing away the causes of the hallucinations to the encephalitis was certainly helpful, when he was terrified he was losing his mind.

He finds the short-term memory loss terrifying, when he winds up in a shop with no clue what he's supposed to be buying, or where his car is in the car park.

He finds the long-term memory loss even worse, when he wakes up and forgets where he is, forgets who Molly is. When Alana calls and Will can't recognise her name, is sure someone has taken her phone. When he got the call to tell him his mother had died, and he was convinced she was already dead.

The long term effects of the time he spent around Hannibal won't leave him, he knows. He finds most amazing about Molly the fact that she didn't know him before. Jack and Alana look at him with pity, like they miss the person he used to be. He likes that Molly never judges him for not being who he used to be, because she never knew that man. Sometimes she sees hints of him, but she just sees it as a good day, rather than a glimpse of what used to be a normal day.

When they were first together, Will used to pretend to be okay, bottle up the feelings until he got home, break down with no company but the dogs. Then one day, he couldn't hold it together. He'd raced to her bathroom and fallen against the door, desperately clawing at his face to get the fucking cannibal mask off. Molly had calmed him down through the bathroom door, stayed with him and told him it's okay to not be okay.

Will didn't think he'd heard that before. It was always push through, compartmentalise because he had lives to save, kill someone to compensate – Hannibal's recommendation only, that one - but never to not be okay. it was just nice to have someone who cared.

End Notes

one more to go!!!!!!! i'm gonna try to make the last one a realllyyy good one but i can't make any promises!

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